

**STATE OF ILLINOIS
HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION**

Meeting of the Commission
April 27, 2016
10:30 a.m.

James R. Thompson Center
DHS - Murdock Room
Suite 5-300
100 West Randolph Street
Chicago, Illinois
and
Lincoln Land Training Center
130 W. Mason Street
Room 104
Springfield, Illinois

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Commissioners

In Chicago

Chair Rose Mary Bombela-Tobias
Duke Alden
Michael Bigger
Robert A. Cantone
Hamilton Chang (via telephone)
Terry Cosgrove
Amy Kurson
Nabi Fakroddin
Lauren Beth Gash
Hermene Hartman
Steve Kim
Diane M. Viverito
Patricia Bakalis Yadgir

In Springfield

None

Absent

None

Staff

Rhandi Anderson
N. Keith Chambers
Michael Evans
Dr. Ewa I. Ewa
Donyelle L. Gray
Evelio Mora

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Byron M. Wardlaw
Christine M. Welninski

Members of Public: None

NOTICE:

Public and closed meetings of the Illinois Human Rights Commission are audio recorded.

I. Call to Order

On April 27, 2016 at 10:35 a.m., Chair Bombela-Tobias called to order a meeting of the Illinois Human Rights Commission.

Pursuant to the Illinois Open Meetings Act, 5 ILCS 120/1 et seq., it was determined that:

- 1) A quorum of the public body was physically present at the meeting.
- 2) Prior to the meeting, Commissioner Chang gave notice to the General Counsel and Secretary of the Public Body, Donyelle Gray that he would not be able to be physically present for the April 27, 2016 meeting and requested to participate via telephone.
- 3) Motion to allow Commissioner Chang to participate via made by Commissioner Cantone, seconded by Commissioner Nabi. Motion carried 12-0.

II. Consideration of Minutes

March 23, 2016

The Commission voted to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2016 meeting as submitted by staff. Motion to approve the March 23, 2016 minutes as submitted made by Commissioner Nabi and seconded by Commissioner Alden. Motion carried 12-0.

III. Chair's Report

Rose Mary Bombela-Tobias, Chair

Chair Bombela-Tobias welcomed Amy Kurson as the Commission's newest member. Commissioner Kurson briefly introduced herself to the Commission.

Chair Bombela-Tobias reported that the discrimination study was going well and that she would give the Commission an update at a later date.

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Chair Bombela-Tobias reported that she attended a meeting of the Midwest Convening of the Association of Racial Equity and Justice. The contents of the meeting will be posted on line and Chair Bombela-Tobias will provide the website link to the material.

Chair Bombela-Tobias reported that she and several Commissioners attended the executive appointment hearings. Chair Bombela-Tobias further reported that she and Commissioners Alden, Chang, Hartman, and Kim were confirmed by the Senate.

IV. Staff Reports

A. N. Keith Chambers, Executive Director

Mr. Chambers gave a welcome to Commissioner Kurson. Mr. Chambers further congratulated all the Commissioners who were recently confirmed by the Illinois General Assembly.

Mr. Chambers reported that there was no news concerning the state budget. Mr. Chambers further reported that the House Appropriation committee has not met for the Commission's budget hearing.

Mr. Chambers reported that he is monitoring SB 2506. SB 2506 will impact the Illinois Human Rights Department in that it will require the Department to dismiss a charge of discrimination when the Complainant commences a lawsuit in a different form involving the same allegation and facts as contained in the Department charge. General Counsel Donyelle Gray also gave a brief synopsis of the bill and the potential impact of it on the Commission. Amendments would be made to the Illinois Human Rights Act that would allow the Complainant to file a Request for Review of such dismissals with the Commission, which would increase the Commission's Request for Review caseload.

Mr. Chambers and General Counsel Gray briefly spoke about the *Timber Creek B&B* case, which is currently pending with the Commission. Mr. Chambers reported that the Commission has received 700 plus emails from the public. The majority of the emails were non-threatening. However, some of them were of an aggressive nature, and he will continue to monitor the situation. General Counsel Donyelle further explained that the parties still had time to file exceptions to the Recommended Order and Decision that was issued in the case, and that the matter was not yet final.

B. Dr. Ewa I. Ewa, Chief Fiscal Officer

Dr. Ewa reported that Commission expenditures remain the same. Dr. Ewa further reported that some vendors would continue to offer their services, despite the lack of a State budget.

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Dr. Ewa explained to the Commissioners that pursuant to a new state rule, Commissioners must be confirmed by the Senate in order to have login access.

Dr. Ewa reported that Rutan-exempt positions cannot be filled by order of the Governor's Office.

C. Michael J. Evans, Chief Administrative Law Judge

Chief Judge Evans gave his report for the month of March 2016.

D. Donyelle Gray, General Counsel

Ms. Gray explained to the Commission that business card vendors have agreed to make business cards for the Commissioners, and the Commissioners may place their orders for business cards.

Ms. Gray reminded the Commissioners that Statements of Economic Interest were due to be filed soon with the Secretary of State, by May 2nd, and reminded Commissioners to allow her to review completed forms prior to filing them. Ms. Gray also reminded the Commissioners that the Supplemental Statement of Economic Interest was due to be filed online by May 1st, and that all should have received an email regarding the filing from the Executive Ethics Commission. Ms. Gray informed the Commissioners that if they had not received such an email, to please contact her immediately. Ms. Gray also distributed a set of Q & As regarding the Statements of Economic Interest and the Supplemental Statement.

Ms. Gray also distributed revised 2016 Commissioner Appointee training materials and advised that any Commissioners who had not yet completed the training for 2016 should use the new materials, which had been updated at the end of March 2016.

Ms. Gray updated the Commissioners on the recent Illinois Supreme Court case *State of Illinois v. AFSCME*, 2016 IL 118422, and how it could potentially impact an Illinois Appellate Court ruling that allowed State employees to continue to receive their salaries despite the lack of a State budget.

Ms. Gray welcomed Commissioner Kurson and reported that there were now no vacancies on the board.

Ms. Gray gave a report on the General Counsel Section's caseload. Since the prior month, the General Counsel's Section had received a new set of Exceptions and the amount of requests for review awaiting panel assignment had increased by 20. Lastly, Ms. Gray distributed current Labor and Employment Law updates.

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V. New Business

None

VI. Old Business

None

VII. Public Comment

None

VIII. Executive Session

None

IX. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:43 a.m. Motion made by Commissioner Gash, seconded by Commissioner Nabi. Motion carried 13-0.

Respectfully submitted,

Donyelle L. Gray
General Counsel